

VZCZCXRO4635
OO RUEH DU RUEHMR RUEHRN
DE RUEHSB #0837 2611023
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
O 171023Z SEP 08
FM AMEMBASSY HARARE
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3441
INFO RUCNSAD/SOUTHERN AF DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY COLLECTIVE
RUEHAR/AMEMBASSY ACCRA 2294
RUEHDS/AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA 2413
RUEHRL/AMEMBASSY BERLIN 0932
RUEHBY/AMEMBASSY CANBERRA 1690
RUEHDK/AMEMBASSY DAKAR 2046
RUEHKM/AMEMBASSY KAMPALA 2467
RUEHNR/AMEMBASSY NAIROBI 4899
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC
RUZEJAA/JAC MOLESWORTH RAF MOLESWORTH UK
RHMFISS/EUCOM POLAD VAIHINGEN GE
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC
RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA 1562
RHEHAAA/NSC WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L HARARE 000837

SIPDIS

AF/S FOR G. GARLAND
DRL FOR N. WILETT
ADDIS ABABA FOR USAU
ADDIS ABABA FOR ACSS
STATE PASS TO USAID FOR E. LOKEN AND L. DOBBINS
STATE PASS TO NSC FOR SENIOR AFRICA DIRECTOR B. PITTMAN

E.O. 12958: DECL: 09/17/2018
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [ASEC](#) [PHUM](#) [ZI](#)
SUBJECT: TSVANGIRAI EXPLAINS NEXT STEPS

Classified By: Ambassador James D. McGee for reason 1.4 (d)

¶1. (C) Ambassador met briefly with Prime Minister Morgan Tsvangirai at Tsvangirai's request on September 17. Though clearly pressed for time, Tsvangirai was relaxed and confident. In response to a question from Ambassador, Tsvangirai said he was confident that Mugabe is committed to making the inclusive government a success. He said that delay in reaching agreement on a cabinet was due to Mugabe's need to "deal with his people." While Mugabe has conceded Home Affairs to the MDC-T, Finance remains under dispute. Tsvangirai said he would suggest to Mugabe that they "park that one" for now while reaching agreement on other portfolios. Once other issues are resolved, Tsvangirai will frankly point out to Mugabe that ZANU-PF has made a mess of the economy and that no foreign aid will flow unless Finance is granted to the MDC. He said he is confident Mugabe will yield. (Comment: It is not evident that this will be finalized on September 17, as press reports suggest. End comment.)

¶2. (C) Tsvangirai explained how events would unfold over the next few weeks. He plans over the coming weekend to pull together his advisors, including a new government strategic unit (GSU) composed of CEOs and other experts, his transition team and the MDC government team, to finalize his administration's 100-day plan, including determination of benchmarks and a monitoring mechanism. Tsvangirai will push to schedule swearing in of ministers early next week. Mugabe will use his emergency powers to create the post of Prime Minister and appoint Tsvangirai; Parliament will need to validate this by passing a constitutional amendment within 90 days to establish the new governmental framework. Tsvangirai plans to hold a ministerial retreat the first week of October to present the 100-day plan before Parliament convenes. Tsvangirai said he will not travel to New York for the UN General Assembly, but instead plans to visit rural areas around the country to see if food distribution is beginning.

¶3. (C) Tsvangirai told the Ambassador that he needed the assistance of his personal advisor, Melinda Ferris, to

coordinate the 100-day strategy, and he requested USG financial assistance for her to travel to Zimbabwe this week.

¶4. (C) Comment: Tsvangirai's confidence that Mugabe is acting in good faith stands in sharp contrast to the views of MDC Secretary General Tendai Biti (septel) and many other informed observers. However, a confident, full-steam-ahead approach represents the best strategy for trying to make a success of this imperfect deal. While we would not bet on it, we will hope that Tsvangirai's 100-day plan creates momentum difficult for ZANU-PF to resist. At a minimum, the front-loading of elements of the MDC's reform agenda will provide early evidence of the prospects for real change in Zimbabwe.

MC GEE